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Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

May 6, 2005

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
U.S. House of Representatives
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Visclosky:

Thank you for your letter, dated April 7, 2005, on behalf of George George, a constituent from Cedar Lake, Indiana. Mr. George is concerned with recent proposals made by the Commission regarding the use of wireless telephones in airborne aircraft. In particular, he states that there is "no hard evidence" that cell phone use will not interfere with aircraft navigational instruments. In addition, he believes that the introduction of cellular telephones on airplanes will increase passenger tension, compromise flight attendants' ability to maintain order in an emergency, and possibly facilitate terrorist coordination. You ask that we review this matter and provide information that addresses Mr. George's concerns.

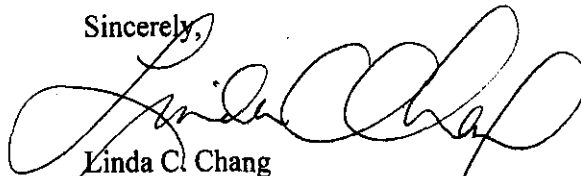
On February 15, 2005, the Commission released a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice)* in WT Docket No. 04-435 that proposes to relax the Commission's current ban on the use of 800 MHz cellular telephones in airborne aircraft, including airplanes. In 1991, the Commission adopted the current ban on the airborne use of cell phones out of concern that such use would interfere with terrestrial cellular networks. On the other hand, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulates the use of cellular telephones, as well as other transmitting portable electronic devices (T-PEDs), on airplanes, out of concern that such devices might interfere with aircraft communications and navigation systems.

Since 1991, advances in technology appear to address the Commission's initial concerns of interference that warranted adoption of the ban. Consequently, the Commission believes that it may now be possible for the traveling public to use their cell phones while airborne without increasing the risk of interference to cellular systems on the ground. Accordingly, in the *Notice*, the Commission proposes to relax the ban on the airborne use of cellular telephones so long as the phones are controlled by a "pico cell" installed onboard private or commercial aircraft that directs the handsets to operate at or near their lowest applicable power settings. It also seeks comment on the practicality of an industry-initiated solution that would enable use of airborne cellular units without the FCC having to mandate technical rules. Finally, the *Notice* seeks comment as to whether the Commission should allow licensees to provide 800 MHz cellular service to airborne wireless units on a secondary basis, subject to certain technical limitations that would ensure no interference to terrestrial operations.

The public is encouraged to submit comments in this proceeding. The filing deadline for comments is May 26, 2005, and for reply comments it is June 27, 2005.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Your letter, as well as this response, will be placed in the record of this proceeding. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Guy Benson, Mobility Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, at 202-418-2946, if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda C. Chang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Linda" being more prominent and the last name "Chang" following in a similar style.

Linda C. Chang
Associate Chief, Mobility Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau

PETER J. VISCLOSKY
1ST DISTRICT, INDIANA

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House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1401

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<http://www.house.gov/visclosky/>

April 7, 2005

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Kevin:

I write on behalf of Mr. George George, a resident of Indiana's First Congressional District.

Mr. George has contacted me to express his opposition to cell phone use on commercial airplanes. Enclosed, please find a copy of the correspondence I have received from Mr. George. I would appreciate your addressing his concerns and making his correspondence part of the official comments you receive for the proposed regulation.

Thank you in advance for your serious consideration of this matter. Do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Visclosky
Member of Congress

PJV:bjb
Enclosure

WJB
other
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DeVooght, Joe

From: PJV
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2005 5:01 PM
To: DeVooght, Joe
Subject: FW: WriteRep Responses

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>-----
>From: writerep
>Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2005 5:01:17 PM
>To: PJV
>Subject: WriteRep Responses
>Auto forwarded by a Rule
>

DATE: March 31, 2005 4:32 PM
NAME: George George
ADDR1: 13843 Huseman st.
ADDR2:
ADDR3:
CITY: Cedar Lake
STATE: Indiana
ZIP: 46303-9214
PHONE:
EMAIL: georgegeorge@webtv.net
msg:

FCC Commissioners
The Federal Communications Commission RE: Docket 04-435
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear FCC Commissioners ,

I am writing to voice my concerns about the FCC's proposal to relax the restrictions on the use of cell phones on airplanes in flight.

There is no hard evidence that cell phone use doesn't interfere with navigational instruments. The introduction of cell phone use in the cabin will not only increase tension among passengers, it will compromise flight attendants' ability to maintain order in an emergency. Cell phone use could also enable terrorists to coordinate a plan of action more effectively.

Please leave the current rules in effect.

Sincerely,

George George
13843 Huseman st.
Cedar Lake, Indiana 46303

cc:
Senator Richard Lugar
Senator Evan Bayh
Representative Pete Visclosky